

## Avoid Spiritual Adultery As A Strange Bedfellow

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

The proverbial saying “adversity makes strange bedfellows” tells us that there are times when people who don’t normally associate with each other form an alliance. These alliances can become entangled to such an extent that it’s difficult to sever the alliance. Both of us are sensitive to this issue because our Lord Jesus ordered us at the beginning of our ministry that we were not to form “*entangling alliances*” with anyone. Over the years His reason for constraining us has become clearer.

We were discipled to live with **Jesus as our Lord** and to be **obedience-based**. This entails not only what our Lord wants us to accomplish, but also how our Lord wants it accomplished. A century ago Oswald Chambers encapsulated this truth: “*The highest Christian love is not devotion to a work or to a cause, but to Jesus Christ.*”

**For many years our *modus operandi* in sharing what the Holy Spirit gives us is that those who read what we present should seek the same Spirit for confirmation. Our obedience exists to support your obedience.**

Most other ministries we’ve encountered over the years have been **outcome-based** – “This is what I’m going to do for the Lord!” They didn’t seek *rhema* of our Lord’s Spirit to do what they were doing, nor did they seek His Spirit’s guidance to know how He wanted the ministry to function. Instead they looked to the success of others, even unbelievers, and copied the techniques and practices that helped them achieve their own self-created outcome. Their quest to accomplish what they wanted to do for the Lord gave them a sense of control, and even led to manipulation to ensure the success of their endeavor.

To enhance their possibility for success, the outcome-based form entangling alliances: getting endorsements from well-known Christian authors for their book; appearing on TV shows to enhance their ministry or their writings; doing conferences together with public figures to feed each other’s fan base. But know this: The outcome-based are always susceptible to entangling alliances – becoming strange bedfellows and violating the Word of God:

*“Woe to the obstinate children,” declares the LORD, “to those who carry out plans that are not Mine, forming an alliance, but not by My Spirit, heaping sin upon sin”* (Isaiah 30:1).

**“Reflect on what we’re saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this”**  
(2Timothy 2:7).

Beginning in the 1970s and 80s, many within Christianity became entangled with outcome-based ministries — ministries which sought wide audience acceptance. Far too many Christians became more impressed by the popularity of those who were speaking at conferences or on TV programs than they were in testing if what was being taught was in accordance with God’s Word. They should have heeded this commendation to the Bereans: “...they received the message with great eagerness and examined

the Scriptures every day to see if what is said is true” (see Acts 17:11). **Marketing and sales** became the key components of these ministries to such an extent that personal confirmation of truth was abandoned. This failure to confirm biblical truth and reject all error coincided with the rise of Christian political activism and the spawning of the Christian Right.

In this light we'd like to encourage you to be careful about the strange bedfellows of **political conservatism** and **biblical conservatism**. What's called political conservatism today is bent on self-preservation of the status of personal wealth and prestige. Its proponents pervert Truth into a lack of regard for the needs of others, and the intolerance of anything that impedes their ungodly obsession. (See Jeremiah 9:23,24)

Biblical conservatism, however, is bent on self-sacrificial living that through love, seeks justice and mercy for the widows and orphans, the poor and needy, and the alien. A biblical conservative lovingly obeys God's commands in regard to other human beings. Ask yourself if this resonates with your spirit:

*As we follow our Lord Jesus we increasingly manifest the balance of His grace and truth, His mercy and His justice in our ongoing life journey. Through love, forgiveness and compassion we reflect our Lord to the world around us. Jesus our Lord is central to who we are. And His primary character qualities of love, forgiveness and compassion are how we approach other people.*

A bit of historic insight: The Christian Right has become a coalition formed around a core of conservative evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics. Since the late 1980s these two groups have been a key Republican voting bloc in presidential elections. How did this come about? By the 1970s, high-profile Christian leaders began to talk more publicly about politics, and several founded organizations, such as Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority. Pat Robertson, an American media mogul, televangelist, political commentator and former Republican presidential candidate, started the 700 Club. Beverly LaHaye, a Christian conservative activist and author, founded Concerned Women for America. The aim of these organizations was to encourage theologically conservative Christians to get more politically involved. Over time, these organizations and activists became known as the Christian Right. Their strategy was outcome-based, to achieve certain goals through political power. But that methodology was not how our Lord Jesus wanted Himself or His purposes represented in the world.

If you wonder why we don't speak very much against political liberalism, it's because most political liberals make no false assertions that they are Bible-based. We've written on several occasions against the abominations of murdering babies, homosexuality, and even a welfare system failing to discern if the person has a true need or is just sucking the finances of others.

Our purpose in directing this teaching toward the Christian Right is to encourage Christ and His love, forgiveness, and compassion to become central to Christian conservatism. And in doing this, to keep it free from entangling alliances, with a singular allegiance and devotion to Jesus our Lord.

It's important to recognize that until the 1970s, evangelicals and most Roman Catholics tended to support Democrats. Jimmy Carter's successful presidential campaign in 1976 connected well with these groups. But during the Carter presidency the Christian Right began moving toward the Republicans. Roe v. Wade (1973) had revealed the importance of the abortion issue and how it violated central Christian teachings. Anti-abortion became the centerpiece of Christian Right politics, while regard for human need evaporated.

By the end of the 1980s the Christian Right had become an essential part of the Republican base. Conservative politics and the popularity of certain political figures used marketing in the same way well-known Christian personalities had been marketed. Politics and politicians began to influence Christians in what they should believe. Here too, God's Word was not the guiding force. Take a look at the motives of both major political parties:

Republicans have sought to maintain and build their Christian Right base without losing support from less religious voters, while Democrats try to expand their appeal by speaking about religion without alienating secular voters.

In their political balancing act you find neither our Lord Jesus nor full commitment to our Lord's commands in either political party. Being spiritually and politically conservative ourselves, we watched the Christian Right change with the rising influence of Conservative Christian Political Action Committees. **These groups were far more political and outcome-based than Christ-devoted.** Personal notoriety, not the interests of Jesus, began to be embraced. Over time these Conservative Christian action groups became the champion of Republicans who wanted to maintain the status of personal wealth and prestige.

The transformation of the Christian Right became more diabolical with the rise of voices that appeared "conservative" and even expressed some particular Christian values. Even the KKK and other fringe militia groups began to influence conservative politics through Christian PACs. Hatred grew as love for fellow man diminished. Intolerance increased until intimidation and outright violence have become the method of political conquest by the Christian/Political Right. Insurrection or civil war are very possible!

***"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter"*** (Isaiah 5:20).

Much of the hatred which has been fostered within the Christian Right has been perpetrated by the tongues of the wicked and by those who are influenced by them. For many years Christian conservatives slowly got sucked into identifying political conservatism as their identity also. But slowly political conservatism, which counts in its leadership many who have broken covenant with their marriage partners, became even more wicked, especially in unChrist-like treatment of people who are less fortunate.

For decades one of the premier voices of political diatribe has been TV/radio personality, Rush Limbaugh (net worth: over \$500 million). Claiming to be politically conservative, the four-time married man became the “voice” of Christian conservatism. Over the years we’ve heard too many conservative Christians say, “Rush Limbaugh is one of us.” The dark attitudes of bitterness and prejudice which Jesus warns His own to avoid like the plague were fanned into greater flame as Limbaugh used his nimble tongue to disparage other humans. The consequence? Christian individuals and families who listened to him soon lost their love, forgiveness and compassion. In their place grew resentment, venomous hatred and bigotry.

For many years we have been warning Christians about Limbaugh and other such hate mongers. At the same time we’ve been deeply saddened by the number of spiritual lives which have been ruined by these wicked tongues. Think about this truth: *“With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be”* (James 3:9,10). Please be careful that this warning doesn’t apply to you: *“A wicked person listens to deceitful lips; a liar pays attention to a destructive tongue”* (Proverbs 17:4).

Limbaugh’s use of verbal attack and denigration entered the political arena beginning with George H.W. Bush, the Christian Right’s choice. In running for a second term as President he was defeated by Bill Clinton. If you can remember back that far, the senior Bush ignored serious economic problems in the country and was most known for numerous campaign speeches in which he denigrated Clinton as a “bimbo”.

You may also remember that God told one of the noted prophetic men of our time on the day before the election that He was choosing Bill Clinton because he was “more humble than George Bush.” Our God also made known to this prophetic voice the exact wording of specific headlines that would appear in major newspapers throughout the country on the day after the elections. This man mailed a letter detailing this information to key religious leaders on the day before the election.

Not having learned from the sorry example of George Bush senior, Presidential candidate John McCain, a Senator for 23 years, detailed few specific plans for what he would do as President to get this nation out of a major recession. But he did overflow with verbiage berating Barack Obama. The next Republican President, Donald Trump, was another “darling of the Christian Right”. He trumped the previous denigrators and took disparagement to a whole new extreme. Even parents and school teachers became afraid of his influence on children.

***“For your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt. Your lips have spoken falsely, and your tongue mutters wicked things”*** (Isaiah 59:3).

You may consider yourself a “conservative”. But are you ensnared in alliances that appear to be your values but fall far short of our Lord and His values of love, forgive-

ness and compassion? In your indignation against Democrats and liberals, are you taking a position against His Greatest Commands?

Now many biblical conservatives are having to question their commitment to political conservatism. As we shared earlier, it isn't easy to break entangling alliances. But we biblical conservatives must lead with love, forgiveness and compassion as we pursue justice for all.



We want to encourage you to catch yourself. If you start losing the grace to love, forgive and have compassion, you may hear our Lord scold you: *“Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first”* (Revelation 2:4). Now is the time to settle this truth for yourself:

The chastisement that is coming on this nation will affect everyone. Now is the time to seek safety in the cleft of the Rock Himself as you prayerfully and willingly convey our Lord Jesus's love, forgiveness and compassion. *“This is the message we have heard from [Jesus] and declare to you: God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth”* (1John 1:5,6).

Remember, Satan doesn't care *how* people don't come to Christ as long as they *don't come to Christ*. Conservative political action won't save this nation! Unbelievers in this nation desperately need to see the power of our Lord at work in and through His own. When the power to *love others as Jesus does* is manifested by we who claim to belong to Him, many will come before Him in repentance and trust so that forgiveness can cleanse them and a new life in Jesus begin. The love of Christ flowing out of you is far more vital for the survival of this nation than is you being influenced by an entangling alliance with hate and bigotry. For your sake and the sake of those you love, choose love.

Mike & Sue

P.S. Ron and Nicki Coil own Pinelow Park & Conference Center, located a couple miles from our home. They've allowed us to park at their center to begin our prayer walks. As we've gotten to know these two people up in our age range, we have been inspired by the work our Lord has assigned them in His kingdom. In hearing their testimony it's been encouraging to befriend another obedience-based couple. We've been praying for them and for the center, and also for a special work our Lord's Spirit gave them in Ecuador. It meant so much to us to see their resolute determination that we asked them if we could send out a prayer request on their behalf. Below is the prayer need we received. We appreciate your prayers for them because their work faces many hurdles.

"We are asking for prayer for locating a property to build or find an existing multi-purpose building for medical center, church, and counseling in the town of Jipijapa, Ecuador. This will be tied to the work of La Prosperina Farm. This is a large project - plans for 200 acre eco village and 50 acres set aside for children and pregnant teens. The board of 7 fine Christian people are working to get grants to get it up and running. The property in Jipijapa is the crucial first step. Location is so important. The needs are great.

We appreciate so much knowing you are praying for Jipijapa

Words cannot express how we feel when we see your car at the coffee shop and you are ready for your prayer walk."